of exorbitant price-rise of steel especially in the past one month, although it had been rising during the last one year. When would steel authorities in India rise to the occasion and respond to the critical situation as obtained in the steel-consuming industry, especially in the small-scale sector? A large number of small-scale units engaged in the production of cycle and its parts, auto parts, hand tools, hardware and fans, etc., have already succumbed to the pressure of the steep rise in the price of steel; and many more are on the verge of closure.

Undoubtedly, the Government have been encouraging the small-scale sector and the industry has also been responding through appreciable development and employment generation, but looking at the situation being faced by the steel-based industry on account of steep hike in the price of steel effected by the steel-producing giants, both in the public and the private sector, had virtually placed the small-scale sector in India in a Catch 22 situation.

The irony of fate is that the steel-based industry in the small-scale sector in India has been incapacitated to face the competition with China in particular, for the reason that steel exported by Indian steel giants to China is cheaper than that sold by them in the country where the prices are exorbitant. The steel giants/exporters, by adding export benefits to the export price get more than fully compensated. The export price happened to be around Rs.14,000 per metric tonne and the price charged in the country is more than Rs.20,000. अभी-अभी 22-23 हजार तक हो गए हैं। This rise of about Rs.8,000 per metric tonne in just one year has sent shock waves to the small-scale sector in the country. This price-hike has added much to the woes of the small-scale sector. It is beyond comprehension why the authorities concerned have not concentrated on the solution to the problem, and may it be expected that immediate meetings with industrialists concerned would be convened to find a solution.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: .Shri Akhtar Hasan Rizvi, absent; Shri P.K. Maheshwari, absent.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 2003-2004

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: मंत्री जी, आप यहां पर बैठे हैं, आपकी सप्लीमेंट्री डिमांड्स हैं। You can lay it now, if the House permits you.

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THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Madam, I lay on the Table a Statement (in English and Hindi) showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for the year 2003-2004.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY CHAIR

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu) : Madam, tomorrow being the Independence Day, everybody wants to leave for their respective States early today. I think, there may not be any quorum in the afternoon. So, I request you to adjourn the House for the day.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not a question of quorum. I was going through the list of all those whose names are appearing on the Private Members' Business. As you know, all will not be here.

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO (Andhra Pradesh) : Since it is the Private Members' Business, we can take it up in the next week also. If the House agrees, we can adjourn.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If the House so agrees, I can adjourn.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand) : Madam, the Private Members' Business can be taken up on the next Friday.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does the House agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, the House agrees, I adjourn the House till 11 o'clock on Monday, the 18th August, 2003. I wish you all the best for a Happy Independence Day. I hope when we come back after the Independence Day, we will have to be more keen on our work. Thank you very much.

The House then adjourned at fifty-one minutes past twelve of the clock till eleven of the clock on Monday, the 18th August, 2003.